Clearance to Bombay III Water Supply Project

5435. SHRI V. N. GADGIL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bombay III water supply project, Mid Vaitarna Project, requires clesarance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests before the project is posed to the World Bank for assistnace:

(b) whether the request of the Maharashtra Government for the clearance has been accepted; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons for non approval?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Under the Environmental Impact Assessment Notification issued by the Ministry of Environment and Ftrests in January, 1994 (as amended in May, 1994), environmental impact assessment and environmental management plants have been made mandatory for 29 categories of projects (including River Valley Schemes) with an investment of Rs. 50 crores and above. The Bombay Water Supply Project, namely, the Mid Vaitarna Project involving the construction of a dam across Vaitarna river, is estimated to cost Rs. 137 crores and requires environmental clearance prior to its implementation.

(b) and (c) The proposal was referred by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay in February, 1993 to the Ministry of Environment and Forests without incorporating the requisite environmental management plan. The project proponents were informed abuot the requirements. Decision bn the project would be possible only on receipt of the environmental management plan.

Increase in the Foret Cover in the country

5436. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRL SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been perceptible increase in the forest cover in the country, as a result of afforestation and wasteland development drives, during the last three years.

(b) if so, the forest cover available as on January 1, 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995, indicating the percentage increase year to year; and

(c) whether there is any difference in the computation of forest area as per (i) satellite imagery and (ii) revenue records?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) There has been a net increase of 22 Sq. Km. of forest cover in the country in the year 1989-91 as compared to the year 1987-89 as reported in the State of Forest Report 1993 published by the Forest Survey bf India which is mainly due to intensive afforestation efforts.

(a) The Forest Survey of India conducts survey of the forest cover once in two years and the survey pertains to a period of two years. As per the latest State of Forest Report 1993, actual forest cover is 6,40,107 Sq. Km. which pertains to the period 1989-91.

(c) As per the latest. State of Forest Report 1993, the recorded forest area is 7,70.078 Sq. Kms. as against actual forest cover of 6.40,107 Sq. Kms.

Environment clearance for a Chemical Zone in Ankleshwar

5437. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Miinster of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that Environmental clearance has been taken by the

Government of Gujarat for creating a chemical zone in Ankleswar;

(b) if so, what are the terms and conditions of the said clearance or permission; and

(c) if not, what action is being taken on Government's decision to set up the chemical zone in the catchment area of irrigation projects and proximity to forests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Appropriate action would need to be taken as and when the proposal is referred to the Government for environmental appraisal.

Increase in respiratory problems in Delhi

5438. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an increase in the cases of respiratory problems taking place in Delhi and other States dues to polluted atmosphere;

(b) if so, what is the number of persons, including the children, who are exposed to high doses of atmospheric pollution; and

(c) what remedial steps Government have been taken for the safety of public and to control the causes of respiratory problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Owing to an increase in levels of pollution in the ambient air due to large scale increase in vehicles in Delhi and other states leading to atmosphere pollution, there could be an increase in respiratory problems. However, no conclusive statistical data is available in this regard.

(c) The steps taken to check the air and water pollution in the country and particularly in Delhi include the following:

(i) Effluent and emission standards have been prescribed.

(ii) A notification stipulating the ambient air quality standards has been issued.

(iii) Industries have been directed to instal necessary pollution control equipment on a time bound basis and *legal action is taken against the defaulting units.*

(iv) Unleaded petrol has been introduced with effect from 1st April, 1995 to be used with new cars fitted with catalytic converters.

(v) A High Powered Committee (HPC) was constituted under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Environment & Forests, Government of India on Comprehensive Action Plan on Environment and Pollution Control in Delhi which submitted its report on August 3, 1994. The Government of National Capital Territory (NCT) Delhi has accepted, in principle, the recommendations of the HPC report and an Implementation Committee hsa been constituted under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Government of NCT Delhi for implementing its recommendations.

(vi) Standards for emissions from vehicles both at the manufacturing stage and in-use have been notified under Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989. A programme for effective complainance with these standards has been initiated. Stricter standards for vehicles at the manufacturing stage to come into effect from 1 April 1996 have been notified.

(vii) Environmental guidelines have been evolved for sitting and operation of industries.